

# Track and Field



*Marathon*



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## Marathon

### *Run Long, Progress Slowly*

Running in a marathon is not something decided upon the day before. Training over a long period of time is necessary to minimize the pain and struggle over the 26-mile distance.

As in any sport, marathon superstars train to a sharp edge. After finishing his 1964 Olympic record marathon, Ethiopia's Abebe Bikila said "I could have run another 10 km (six miles)". Training routines vary. Frank Shorter, winner of the 1972 Olympic gold medal, usually works out twice daily: one 7-to-10 mile run and a group of short sprints (called "intervals"). Three times a week, Shorter runs a 20-mile distance. Others, such as two-time New York City Marathon winner Bill Rodgers, forsake interval work for more distance. Rodgers ran 220 miles in one week before a major race, a daily average of 30 miles.

For someone of average physical condition, such long-distance training is not recommended or practical. The basic rules of training for one's first marathon are: run regularly; run longer before running faster; progress slowly, but steadily.

The body should be conditioned over a period of time. One plan suggests starting one year before the marathon you plan to run, beginning with daily walk-jogs of less than 30 minutes. Distance running is worked into gradually in this plan, with a typical week six months before the marathon featuring daily workouts of no more than 20 minutes each, with one longer run each week.

The full 26 miles does not have to be covered in any day to prepare for the event. Experienced runners advise that one should average about 6.5 miles daily (a quarter of the distance), with 9 miles per day being a better goal.

The runner should always keep in mind how much time he is running. One advantage this offers is that, as the runner trains into shape, he will cover more ground over the same period of time, checking his progress. Another is the making of a "clock inside the head".

This will come in handy during the 26-mile run, for it must be perfectly paced if the athlete is to finish.